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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR 6 MARCH, 2007

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for March 06, 2007. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL

SABAH: Reactions to allegations that Ocalan is being slowly poisoned by state authorities, the Ministry of Justice sent three faculty members from the Uludag University to Imrali Prison to take hair and skin samples from Ocalan for further analysis to probe the allegations. Government Spokesperson Cemil Cicek said that they will have refuted the lies about Abdullah Ocalan's alleged poisoning by the end of the week.

SABAH: The Ankara Prosecutor's Office started an investigation against Aysel Tugluk, deputy chairperson of DTP, for her statements over the alleged poisoning of Ocalan.

GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: Gundem daily has launched a campaign since Saturday (March 3) and has been carrying on its front page the following statement: "They are poisoning Ocalan. Please open the doors of Imrali Prison to a commission of independent doctors." The daily further reports public meetings and festivities initially intended for March 8 Women's Day in Sirnak's Cizre district as turning into protests upon circulation of allegations about the health condition of Abdullah Ocalan. Police detained 150 of the 200 women holding a march in Cizre. Activities marking the March 8 Women's Day were also held in Mardin's Nusaybin and Kiziltepe districts. 6000 people reportedly attended a march that started from Freedom Avenue and ended in front of the DTP provincial building. Slogans were as follows: "Turkey is being poisoned," "The antidote of the poison is the PKK," "Ocalan is the guarantee of our lives." Some students at Dicle University in Diyarbakir boycotted classes and meals.

EVRENSEL: When asked about his opinion on DTP- suggested commission of independent doctors to investigate allegations about Ocalan's poisoning, SHP national chairperson Karayalcin said that that suggestion was meaningless. Karayalcin further stated that the (Turkish) state must protect lives of all the inmates including Ocalan.

GUNDEM: Ministry of Interior started an investigation against the Newroz Committee, which is comprised of Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir, other DTP mayors and civil society organizations, allegedly for sending an invitation in Kurdish for Newroz celebrations to President Sezer, PM Erdogan and Iraqi

President Talabani.

GUNDEM: DTP National Headquarters issued a press release saying that pressure on the party administrators at national headquarters, at party organizations in provinces and districts has intensified nowadays and they had been made target of hostile intentions.

GUNDEM: The news stories about Ocalan alleging that the state authorities were poisoning him, the Kurds from different parts of the world were infuriated. People in Europe reportedly held protests. Fifty-four mayors (from DTP) and Diyarbakir Peace Platform made a press announcement yesterday at Diyarbakir Southeastern Journalists' Association and claimed that the (Turkish) state was carrying out a slow murder. (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: Over 5000 people reportedly attended the activities carried out in a place at the outer edge of the Mountain Cudi in Sirnak's Silopi district to mark the March 8 World Women's Day. Women hit the streets with slogans shouting "Down with racism, militarism and violence." (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: The daily noted that women particularly emphasized their worries over the health condition of Abdullah Ocalan. The daily reports further women's activities going on in Gaziantep, Mardin's Kiziltepe and Nusaybin districts, Sanliurfa, Siirt and Van. The daily also claimed that thousands of people held a protest in Mersin's Gunesli quarter and shouted slogans saying 'Our health is Ocalan's health.' (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: Despite that the population of Nusaybin reached to 100,000, there is only one high school in the district. People

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demanding that a second school be built and they protested the authorities for not undertaking that effort. (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: Police conducted an unannounced raid at the premise of Democratic Youth Association in Diyarbakir and seized a computer, CDs, books and journals. An official from the association said he will file a complaint with the prosecutor against the authorities that conducted the raid. (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: A personnel from the Gundem daily, who was detained in Sanliurfa for allegedly shouting illegal slogans in a public meeting called 'Invitation for Peace at the City of Prophets', has recently been arraigned and arrested. (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: It is reported that heated negotiations between the U.S. and Turkey is going on over the use of Incirlik Airbase. The U.S. is reportedly seeking an expanded use of the base and the topic of the discussions reportedly also is also related with the military operations against the PKK and survey flights into Iran. (This summary is from March 5 edition.)

GUNDEM: Police conducted a raid at six houses of students at Van Centennial University who are reportedly members of the university's student association. Thirty students were reportedly detained on grounds that were not announced by police. Meanwhile, a Molotov cocktail was left at the door of the provincial party building of DTP Elazig chapter and the wick of the device was in a condition ready to be burned.

EVRENSEL: Some mayors, political parties, and organizations paid a visit to Zulkuf Karatekin, Kayapinar Mayor in Diyarbakir, who was sentenced to five months in prison for allocating a municipality vehicle for the use of women's branch of the former DEHAP (Democratic People's Party), to extend support to him.
ECONOMY

RADIKAL / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / ZAMAN: Agricultural season

started in Adana. Seasonal workers brought their children along with them from their hometowns in the southeastern region to work in the fields in Mersin and Adana.

CRIME / LAW ENFORCEMENT

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / ZAMAN: Police found eight Glock brand pistols in hidden sections of a private car in Sanliurfa. Separately, Van police conducted a raid at a house in a village of Van's Baskale district and found an assassination rifle during the searches made at the stable and garden of the house.

CULTURE / SOCIETY / ENVIRONMENT

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Ulrich Zachau, Turkey Director of the World Bank, paid a visit to Business Development Center in Adana.

SABAH (GUNEY): With support from Social Solidarity and Cooperation Foundation, Diyarbakir Governor's Office has been training 200 women to read and write and in Yenikoy quarter's Women and Children Training Center. The trainees are learning Turkish as well. In a total of four other centers, a total of 2000 people are being trained.

RADIKAL: At the same school, where boiler of a heating system exploded and killed two students and wounded 7 people two weeks ago (see press summary for February 23) in Kilis's Musabeyli district, this time a teacher and 17 students were poisoned because of the carbon monoxide gas release from a stove they were using to heat the classroom.

GREEN